

Pakatan And PKR Lame Without Anwar, Claim Analysts

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KUALA LUMPUR, (Bernama) -- Now that Parti Keadilan Rakyat's (PKR) de facto leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has been convicted and imprisoned, all eyes will now be on the party's collaboration with DAP and PAS, with which it had formed an alliance in 2008.

What more, with all that squabbling going on between the DAP and PAS with regard to their individual party's struggles, the absence of Anwar, who had been a pillar of strength for Pakatan Rakyat, will surely have an impact on the working relationship among the member parties.

Several political analysts interviewed by Bernama expressed the opinion that without the MP for Permatang Pauh, the coalition might find it difficult to gain support in the next general election.

They also felt that the coalition may become lame, considering that Anwar had played a major role in shaping its strategies and direction.

DIRECTION OF DAP AND PAS

What will DAP's relationship with PAS be like in Pakatan Rakyat without the Anwar factor?

Associate Prof Datuk Dr Shamsul Adabi Mamat, a lecturer with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, said the rift between the two parties, which was already evident now, was expected to worsen.

Pointing out that Anwar had been playing the role of mediator and was the unifying factor which brought the three parties together, he predicted that Pakatan Rakyat would become less influential in the political landscape of the nation.

"It was Anwar who enabled the coalition to gain enough momentum to give one the impression that it had the ability to take over Putrajaya. But now the momentum will slow down because his direct touch is not going to be felt by the three parties," he said here, today.

He also opined that PAS would continue to be "bullied" by its allies, owing to the differences in the ideologies that they practised.

"All this while, PAS had been able to be part of the coalition simply because of the Anwar factor. And, if the bullying continues, it might consider withdrawing from the coalition," he said.

WHO IS FIT TO BE THE NEXT OPPOSITION LEADER?

Is there any leader from the the opposition parties who can adequately fit into Anwar's shoes?

Prof Dr Ahmad Atory Hussain, a lecturer with Universiti Sains Malaysia's Centre for Social Science Studies, said Anwar's role as Opposition Leader may be assumed by his wife, Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, who is PKR President.

"Although at this point of time Pakatan Rakyat has yet to decide who will replace Anwar, I see Wan Azizah taking over but, perhaps, for a short period of time. Other possible replacements include Mohamed Azmin Ali (PKR Deputy President)," he said.

Shamsul Adabi also shared Ahmad Atory's views, saying that it was likely that someone from Anwar's family may step in to dominate Pakatan Rakyat's affairs and act as a mediator between PAS and DAP.

"It could be either Wan Azizah or Anwar's daughter Nurul Izzah," he added.

NO MORE REFORMASI MOVEMENT

Present at the Palace of Justice in Putrajaya today were opposition leaders and Anwar's supporters, who carried banners and shouted "reformasi".

Will today's decision by the Federal Court trigger the spirit of "reformasi", which was unleashed in 1998?

Ahmad Atory did not think it would, pointing out that the people were already fed up with Anwar's protracted sodomy case.

"Maybe some hardcore supporters may hold a few gatherings... but I think a majority of Malaysians are satisfied with what the government is doing for them.

"So why should they ask for reforms? They wanted the Internal Security Act to be abolished and the government did so. They wanted the economy to be strengthened, and the government implemented the Economic Transformation Programme. They wanted corruption to stop and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission was given more power. The government has implemented everything for them," he said.

Anwar lost his final appeal at the Federal Court against his conviction for sodomising a former aide.

Chief Justice Tun Arifin Zakaria, who led a five-member panel, delivered the judgement and upheld the five-year jail term imposed by the Court of Appeal.

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